



**State of Vermont
Department of Education**

Student Education Course Transcript (SECT) Data Collection Pilot

Near the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year the Vermont Department of Education (VT DOE) asked for volunteers to test the internally developed system for collecting and maintaining course information by educators and students (the SECT data). Two Supervisory Unions submitted data for a total of four schools both elementary and secondary. The school data included:

- Between 87 and 466 courses
- Between 23 and 36 educators
- Between 88 and 441 students

VT DOE asked district staff to provide feedback on the data collection pilot in order to help us understand their process of gathering the data for submission to make improvements.

In terms of time commitment, one SU estimated 83 hours of work for three elementary/middle schools. The other SU committed 110 hours to complete the data files for a single high school. Mapping local course codes to standardized federal course codes and other code sets required the most time. Mapping secondary school course requires more time perhaps due to the greater diversity of course offering. Both of these schools accessed the data in an existing student information system which likely reduced the amount of time required to create the data files for submission.

The two pilot sites reported involvement of superintendents, IT data coordinators, curriculum coordinators, guidance staff, and some registrars to complete the data files for submission. The need for input by staff in so many different roles suggests that the most efficient process for completing the data submission requires a coordinated effort at the local site. In response to this feedback, the VT DOE has asked all superintendents to identify a SECT coordinator. The SECT coordinator will be the primary point of contact throughout the data collection cycle but is not expected to complete all the work required for the project.

Other feedback indicated the need for justification of the requested data fields, more complete data definitions, training, and a data file template. The VT DOE is working on each of these items and expects to have them in place by the end of May when the data collection is deployed. However, schools can begin mapping their local course to federal codes immediately in preparation for completing the data collection.